



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

June 13, 2018

The Honorable Rick Scott
Governor
State of Florida
400 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

RE: Protect health coverage for Floridians with pre-existing conditions

Dear Governor Scott,

We are extremely concerned about the Trump Administration's refusal to defend the nation's health care law, and the state of Florida's decision to join as a party to *Texas v. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)*. By joining this lawsuit, the state of Florida is actively working to hurt Americans with pre-existing conditions. And, as representatives of the people of Florida, we urge you to withdraw from this dangerous suit immediately—and instead adopt additional consumer protections that will protect those with pre-existing conditions.

Having failed multiple times to rip health coverage away through Congress, the Trump Administration is now attempting to use the court system to take the guarantee of health coverage away from 7.8 million Floridians with pre-existing conditions. This is wrong.

In February, attorneys general in 20 states—including the attorney general of Florida—filed a lawsuit in *Texas v. HHS* to strike down the nation's health care law and all of its critical protections with no plan in place to replace it. And just last week, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) filed a brief in that case urging the court to do exactly what these states are asking for—to overturn critical pieces of the nation's health care law.

If the administration and these attorneys general prevail, health insurers across the country will once again be able to charge unlimited premiums for older adults and discriminate against people with pre-existing conditions by refusing to offer them coverage or charging them exorbitant premiums simply because of their past medical history.

If successful, this dangerous lawsuit that you and Attorney General Bondi have joined will harm roughly 130 million Americans, including 7.8 million Floridians who have a pre-existing condition, such as diabetes, cancer, asthma and Alzheimer's—and it will take us back to a time when health insurers oftentimes outright rejected, or offered severely limited coverage to, Americans with such conditions. It will also put great financial strain on our hospitals and communities due to uncompensated care costs.

Floridians deserve better.

We understand that your decision to join this lawsuit is consistent with your earlier actions in favor of repealing the nation's health care law and refusing to expand Medicaid coverage to 800,000 Floridians. But, just as we did in our letter on May 17, we once again implore you to work with us to set a different course and do what is right for the people of Florida.

We urge you to support protections that prohibit insurance companies from charging people higher rates based on their health status, and to expand Medicaid coverage to 800,000 Floridians who desperately need it. Just last month, the state of Virginia changed its course and chose to finally expand Medicaid coverage for its residents because "key Republicans from rural areas couldn't bear to deny coverage for their constituents any longer." The people of Florida deserve the same.

So, instead of building additional barriers to keep health care coverage away from those in need, we strongly urge you to withdraw from this reckless lawsuit immediately and work with us to increase consumer protections for the people of Florida and continue to prevent health care plans from discriminating against those with pre-existing conditions.

Sincerely,



Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Kathy Castor
United States Representative



Alcee L. Hastings
United States Representative



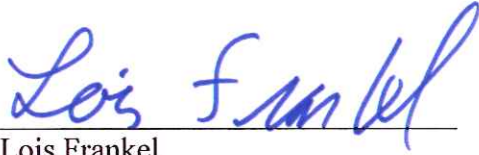
Frederica S. Wilson
United States Representative



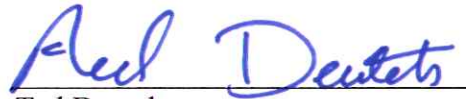
Stephanie Murphy
United States Representative



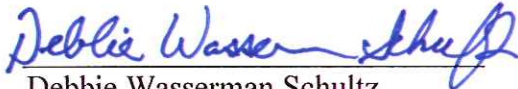
Darren Soto
United States Representative



Lois Frankel
United States Representative



Ted Deutch
United States Representative



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
United States Representative



Al Lawson, Jr.
United States Representative



Charlie Crist
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